Does she have the permission of the House for remaining absent from all the sitting of the current Session?

(No Hon. Member dissented)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Permission to remain absent is granted.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Situation arising out of growing labour unrest privatisation of PSUs, etc. caused by loss of job, violation of labour laws, closure of units

SHRI JIBON ROY (West Bengal): Sir, I call the attention of the hon. Minister of Labour to the situation arising out of growing labour unrest caused by loss of job, violation of labour laws, closure of units, privatisation of PSUs, etc.

श्रम मंत्री (श्री साहिब सिंह वर्मा) : माननीय उपसभापति महोदया, मैं माननीय सदस्यों को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूं जिन्होंने श्रम से संबंधित इस महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दे को उठाया । मैं उनकी चिंताओं से सहमत हूं । महोदय, उभर रहे आर्थिक वातावरण, जिसमें तीव्र प्रौद्योगिकीय परिवर्तन, अर्थव्यवस्था का वैश्वीकरण, व्यापार एवं उद्योग का उदारीकरण शामिल है, से रोजगार के तौर तरीकों में परिवर्तन आया है । हालांकि कृषि, खनन एवं उत्खनन, विद्युत गैस और जल आपूर्ति एवं सामुदायिक, सामाजिक तथा कार्मिक सेवाओं जैसे क्षेत्रों में रोजगार में कमी आयी है किन्तु निर्माण, व्यापार, परिवहन, भंडारण तथा संचार एवं वित्तीय सेवाओं जैसे अन्य क्षेत्रों में आशातीत वृद्धि दर्ज की गयी है । वर्ष 1997 से 2000 के दौरान हड़तालों और तालाबंदियों की संख्या में कमी हुई है । हालांकि इनके कारण नष्ट हुए श्रम दिवसों में वृद्धि हुई है । केन्द्रीय औद्योगिक संबंध तंत्र के संराधन प्रयासों के द्वारा 2002-03 के दौरान कोयला उद्योग, जिसमें कोल इंडिया लि. और सिंगरेनी कोयला खदाने शामिल हैं तथा पत्तन और गोदी क्षेत्र में बड़ी हड़तालों को टाला गया था । इससे बड़ी संख्या में कामगारों को लाभ हुआ तथा मजदूरी एवं उत्पादन में प्रत्याशित हानि को भी टाला गया है।

वर्ष 1997 से 2000 के दौरान, वर्ष 2000 को छोड़कर, छंटनी और बंदी से प्रभावित कामगारों की संख्या में कुछ वृद्धि हुई है । जब कभी श्रम कानूनों के उल्लंघन के बारे में कोई शिकायत प्राप्त होती है या किसी प्रकार की जानकारी मिलती है, तब आवश्यक निरीक्षण किये जाते हैं तथा प्रभावित कामगारों को अपेक्षित राहत प्रदान की जाती है जिससे इस संबंध में होने वाली श्रमिक अशांति से बचा जा सके ।

जहां तक बदलते आर्थिक ढांचे में सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रमों के निजीकरण का संबंध है, सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र उपक्रमों तथा गैर कार्यनीति क्षेत्रों में विनिवेश की प्रक्रिया शुरू की गयी है ।

तथापि, कर्मचारियों/कामगारों के हितों का संरक्षण विनिवेश नीति का अभिन्न भाग है । विनिवेश के समय हस्ताक्षर किए जाने वाले शेयर धारकों के अनुबंधों में कर्मचारियों के हितों से जुड़े उपयुक्त प्रावधान शामिल किए गये हैं । इस प्रकार की बंदी/छंटनी से प्रभावित कामगारों के हितों की रक्षा करने के लिए औद्योगिक विवाद अधिनियम, 1947 और अन्य श्रम कानूनों के अधीन सुरक्षा उपायों का प्रावधान है। जब कभी जनशक्ति का यौक्तिकीकरण आवश्यक समझा जाता है, तो सरकार बेशी कामगारों (सरप्लस वर्कर्स) के लिए स्वैच्छिक सेवानिवृत्ति पैकेज का प्रस्ताव करती है । वर्ष 2001-2002 में केंद्रीय सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र उपक्रमों के यौक्तिकीकृत कर्मचारियों के लिए परामर्श, पुनर्प्रशिक्षण और पुनः तैनाती की योजना भी प्रारंभ की गई है जिसका उद्देश्य केन्द्रीय सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र उपक्रमों के यौक्तिकीकृत कर्मचारियों को पुनर्प्रशिक्षित करना है । कामगारों की नियोजनशीलता बढ़ाने के लिए कौशल विकास पर जोर दिया गया है । इसी संबंध में एक विवरण सभापटल पर रख दिया गया है ।

SHRI JIBON ROY: Thank you, Madam Deputy Chairperson. The point is, if the Government cannot do anything good for the labour, I would request it not to manipulate the things also. Hitler could not do anything for himself through manipulation, nor this Government would be able to do anything for itself through manipulation. The Government has agreed that so far as labour is concerned, the situation, in the current scenario, is not satisfactory. But the Government has not mentioned anything as to how this situation can be rectified; how the workers can be helped in the existing scenario. The Second National Commission on Labour also has not done any justice to the labour class. Rather, it has made three graphic observations on the consequences of the reforms. So far as the economy is concerned, it has depicted a situation, as if the economy is collapsing. So far as the industrial economy is concerned, the Commission, in its report, at page 285, has said except the IT, telecommunication and entertainment industries, all other traditional industries are facing problems. There is no demand for their products. They have to face a fierce competition from the imported products and from the products manufactured by the MNCs, in India. So, the observation of the Second National Commission on Labour is that the economy is getting collapsed. So far as labour condition is concerned, the report of the Commission, at page 275, says, "A large number of such industries are downsizing; and, some have closed down." This has resulted in VRS, retrenchment, and closure of units. A large number of workers have lost their jobs. The small-scale industries are the worst affected. A large number of them have been closed. No new investment is taking place in this sector. The capital market is almost dead for the last three years. A very few new issues have been launched. The Report, at page 247, further says, "210 million man-days were lost during 1999-2000. Out of it 120 million man-days were lost

due to lockouts. Eight lakh workers have been thrown out of jobs through VRS, retrenchment and other retirement schemes." These are not my observations. There are the observations of the Second National Commission on Labour, which had been constituted by this Government. It had been assured in this House that not a single employee would be victimised. Now, the people are being thrown out of their jobs in the name of VRS. Even the VRS money has not been paid to them. They have been told that money would be paid in five instalments. I would like to know, what is your Ministry doing? Is it the Ministry of Labour? Or, is it the Ministry of Employers? The Second National Commission on Labour had observed about the role of the Government and the role of the Ministry of Labour. I quote from the Report of the National Commission on Labour, page 247. It says, "The attitude of the Government, especially the Central Government, towards workers and employers seems to have undergone a change. Now, permissions for closure and retrenchment are more easily granted." It further says, "The conciliatory machinery is more eager to consider problems of employers. Recovery proceedings against employers, who could not pay heavy dues of workers, are not being pursued seriously by the industrial relations machinery, if the financial position of the employer is very bad. The Labour adjudication machinery is more willing to entertain the concern of the industry." Madam, it is not my observation; it is the observation made by the Second National Commission on Labour. Now, you can understand the position of the labourers. When the reform process was launched, we opposed it on the ground that in the end, it would be directed against labour only. We were ridiculed by saying that since our political platform is based on poor people; since we are living on the votes of the poor people, that is why, we want to maintain poverty and we worship poverty. Reforms would eliminate poverty, and since we want to retain poverty, we are opposing reforms. That was the opinion of the then Government and the people who supported reforms. But, what is the condition now? Several reports have said that the growth rate of labour force has gone down. It is going down alarmingly. Between 1983 and 1994, the average growth rate was 2.04 per cent. Between 1994 and 2000, the growth rate was 0.98 per cent. I want to know from the hon. Labour Minister what steps are being taken to increase the labour force and to increase employment?

Madam, the percentage of working population has gone down by half because of the decline in the population rate. But the growth rate of unemployment has gone up by 30 per cent, that is, from 3.63 per cent to

4.4 per cent. This is an alarming situation. The hon. Minister has agreed that employment in the organised sector, both public sector and private sector, is going down. So far as the organised industry is concerned, there is a decline in employment at every stage. The hon. Minister has agreed that employment has increased only in the unorganised sector. So, what is your Government doing? You say that our voters in the constitutency are poor, that is why, we are trying to retain poverty. Then what are you doing? You are redistributing poverty. You are redistributing poverty by decreasing the number of organised workers and increasing the contractual workers! Today, the strength of contract workers is 30 per cent of the total work force. And the percentage of organized workers in small-scale industries is also declining. The hon. Minister has himself mentioned this; I need not quote the figures. The number of organised workers in mining and quarrying sector is also declining. The growth rate of employment in electricity and manufacturing sectors has also come down. This is an alarming situation so far as employment is concerned. Madam, we have been demanding, through you, for the last five years that growth rate in employment should be increased. Madam, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister, we have been demanding this for the last ten years, that there should a law for the agricultural workers also. Why is there no law for agricultural workers?

The Second National Commission on Labour said that we have been working for the employers. I would suggest that the Ministry of Labour should be renamed. Instead of calling it Ministry of Labour, let it be renamed as the Ministry of Employer. As far as farmers are concerned, what is the problem in enacting a law for the agricultural workers? Because, the rich farmers are against it. But, what about the problems being faced by the agricultural labour? Madam, 60 per cent of the total workforce constitutes agricultural workers. And, their strength is going down by 0.4 per cent every year. Their strength in the organised sectors, both in private and public, has declined greatly. The strength of agricultural workers is declining by 0.4 per cent every year. And, what is the condition of landless labourers? In 1981, the strength of landless workers was 24.54 per cent of the entire rural population. And, now, about 30 per cent of the villagers are landless. What is your Ministry doing? What are you presiding over? At least, not labour. Why don't you rename your Ministry? Then, BPL rate for foodgrains has gone up by 66 per cent. In 2001, the prices of wheat and rice went up by 62 per cent. And, you are saying that you are

doing all the best possible for the labour community. Agricultural workers constitute 60 per cent of our total workforce. Their strength is going down. Their wage level is going down. In the President's Address, you have claimed that the lowest minimum wage is Rs.50/- per day. That comes to Rs.1500/- per month. Your Ministry has brought out a document in which it has been stated that the wage level in private iron and steel industries is Rs.50/- per day. It comes to Rs.1500/- per month. So, it is the lowest. It has been stated in that document. You go through that document. In 2001, foodgrain prices went up by 66 per cent. Offtake is not taking place. People are dying because of starvation. But you won't agree with me if I say that somebody died because of starvation. As far as labour laws are concerned, I would request the Minister of Labour to speak the truth. They should not be allowed to manipulate.

Madam, when you suggested to discuss the Report of the Second National Commission on Labour, I opposed it because it ought to be discussed in the Labour Standing Committee first. Sir, you are a new entrant to the Ministry of Labour. If you go through the earlier laws, you will find that in all the labour laws, passed during the post-second World War -- not in our country but in all the countries -- there was a truce between labour and capital. It comes to Parliament last. If you, now, declare that that truce has been broken, no discussion is necessary, you will come straight to Parliament, then, you will have to face the consequences. You will have to face retaliation too. You have used the Chair of Rashtrapatiji to announce that you are discussing the matter with labourers. How many meetings of the Standing Committee have you called uptill now? Often, you take the pleasure in saying that, in the meetings, I call all the MPs, I call all the unions, separately. I want to know: Is Standing Committee your *darbar*? I want to know whether the agenda to be discussed in this august House can be decided in your office. You have to call regular meetings of your Standing Committee on Labour where all these things are to be discussed. You have said that I am discussing it in the National Labour Conference. I was present there. If you refer to that discussion, I would like to tell you that it was a two-hour discussion, and the proceedings of that Conference were covered in 1500 pages. ...(*Time- bell*)... Madam, I would take only two-three minutes more. Now, if you refer to that discussion, in that case, I would like to tell you that everybody had opposed the Report of the Second National Commission on Labour. Even those who had supported it, in the book they have also said that everybody has opposed the implementation of the Report.

Madam, I would like to bring to the notice of the House that after the Second World War, the toiling people and labour got concessions in three areas. My observation is that the Government is going to withdraw all these concessions which the labour and toiling masses had received after the Second World War. The first concession which they had received was in the form of 'rule the labour through law'. This concession was the gift of the victory of the Soviet Union over the Hitler and Fascism. This Government is going to withdraw this concession, *i.e.*, the concession 'rule the labour through law'. They are not discussing it there. They are bringing forward a Bill straight here in the Parliament. They are saying that henceforth there would be no permanent workers. All permanent jobs will be manned by the temporary contractor workers. This is the thing. That is why they are not ready to discuss it here. The second Bill which the Government is bringing is that 'anybody can be thrown out of the factories without consulting the Government.' This process has already been started. Therefore, this concession which the labour had received after the Second World War is also being withdrawn. The second concession which the labour had received after the Second World War was in the form of the birth of public sector. The concept of the public sector was not there before the Second World War. It has come into existence after the victory of the Soviet Union, socialist forces, labour over the capitalist forces. It is the result of that victory. It has trickled down to the people. But, now, they are almost going to withdraw this concession. Madam, if the Government privatise the HPCL, the petroleum sector, then, everything is gone.

Madam, I had opposed the Bill here. But, in the last day of the Winter Session of Parliament, both the ruling party and the main Opposition had agreed to pass that Bill. Everything you produce, either goods or services, has to be sold in profit. Nothing is to be sold below the cost of production. Madam, as I understand, services mean health, education, public distribution system, etc. All these things come under the 'services'. Therefore, a premise has been created that everything, namely, electricity, water, etc. has got to be sold. Madam, the concept of the welfare-State is gone, is withdrawn. The Government has diluted all the concessions which were given to the labour and the toiling people after the Second World War. You should understand it. You know that you are doing it consciously. My point is, the time is coming when they will capture the entire oxygen through a new technology and the competition law will be applied to that, and a situation could come when nobody can live, nobody can survive

unless the needy people buy oxygen from the owner of the oxygen, which means the capitalist.

Madam, at the end, I would like to say that the Ministry of Labour is not like any other Ministry. The constituents of the Labour Ministry are labour, employer and the Government. They have to work together. Mr. Minister, you are presiding over a tripartite body. If you side with one, that means, that truce, that is there, is gone. The truce is gone. In the absence of a truce, the labour would be agitated. Today, half-a- million workers have come to Delhi. Madam, around 20 million workers are demonstrating all over the country and holding public meetings. It is the policy of this Government to break the truce. If you continue to break the truce, you will have to face the consequences, face the music. The Labour Bill will have to be discussed with the labour first. If you introduce the Bill without the labour, without discussing it with the labour, you will face a nation-wide strike. You introduce the Bill and the next day, you will get the strike notice. The notice will come and the strike will take place in the current Session of Parliament itself. Probably, by this time, it is declared simultaneously all over the country and also from the *Ram Leela Maidan*. Therefore, if you take your own decision, then the music will follow; the orchestra will follow. With these words, I request the Government to carry the labour also with it in dealing with labour laws and labour issues. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Manoj Bhattacharya.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal) : My submission is that we can extend the time for the Calling Attention - as the first speaker has taken reasonable time and we will be under time constraints - and thereafter can take up the legislative business. The spill-over legislative business can be taken up by tomorrow because tomorrow we are not going to take up the reply to the debate on Motion of Thanks. This is for your submission.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Because tomorrow we are not having the reply of the Prime Minister on the Motion of Thanks and the discussion is over on the Motion of Thanks, we can spill over the legislative business tomorrow. I agree to it. But it does not mean that we keep on discussing the Calling Attention the whole day. Since Shri Jibon Roy has spoken extensively on the subject, I would like the hon. Members to be pointed because that is what the Calling Attention means.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand) : Madam, we can adjourn for lunch at 1.00 p.m. and then reassemble at 2.15 p.m. because there is a function in the Central Hall, which will be over by 1.55 p.m. or 2.00 p.m., and at 2.15 p.m., the Railway Budget can be placed on the Table.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is one minute's job.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU (West Bengal) : Normally, we are having one hour for the Calling Attention. Then, why should we deviate from that? There is no such precedent also in this House.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: The President of India is coming.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Nilotpal Basuji, the problem is that apart from the function, I have twelve names for the Calling Attention. If everybody is going to take, at least, ten minutes - which generally they do - then time will be there. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let us reach the lunch stage, then we will decide. Shri Manoj Bhattacharya.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA (West Bengal): Thank you, Madam. Today is a very significant day in the history of the movements of the people of this country, and particularly the working class. Today I am reported just now that quite a few lakhs of workers from across the country from almost all States of the country, who are aggrieved, have reached Delhi to express their serious resentment to their present plight that has been caused because of the most derogatory policies in regard to labour which have been vigorously pursued by this Government at the Centre. Madam, I know that the labour market regulations are cited specifically as constraints to successful reform. The World Bank Document on Africa - I am quoting the name of the book - 'Sub Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth, 1989', says that, "the experience suggests that, except on grounds of health or worker safety, Governments should resist interfering in labour markets. If let alone, they work well. The political imperative is to interfere, but economic logic is not to..." And since the Government of India today is absolutely mortgaged to the economic compulsions, as directed by the financial lending organisations like, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank or the W.T.O., they have withdrawn from politically interfering in the areas where the labour is being tortured. Madam, the Minimum Wage legislation, the regulations restricting the ability of the employer to hire and

fire, and the related interventions, tend to raise costs, reduce competitiveness and restrain the growth, according to them, and it also restrains the growth of employment. So, I will submit, Madam, that today's labour problems are closely associated with all this. They cannot be viewed in isolation from the growing unemployment problem. The Minister is a conscientious person. He will certainly appreciate that, in the recent past, the unemployment has gone up manifold. The problem of unemployment has many facets, and the world is now reeling under the heavy burden of unemployment, and when the problem of full unemployment, partial unemployment, marginal unemployment or pseudo unemployment is growing up, the labour market is going to lose its credibility or potential as such, and because of the policies that are being pursued by the Government, the problem of unemployment will further grow; and once unemployment grows, the value of labour will certainly go down, and then they will come out with a legislation to control the labour. It is a vicious circle. We have told a number of times that this is an economic doctrine of zero labour; this is a doctrine of jobless growth and voiceless growth, and the so called labour market reforms are altogether anti-labour and anti-poor co intries. This is the case not only with India, but also with many other poor countries of the world. These reforms are parts of the Structural Adjustment Programme, SAP, of the Fund Bank, that seeks total unrestricted mobility of capital and commodities across the national frontiers, but would not allow the corresponding privileges to another equally important factor of production, that is, labour, to move from the labour-intensive places to the labour-deficit places, and that is globalisation. India is a country where a number of people are there to work. As has been reported by the Government agencies, about 12 crores people are unemployed at present. The live register of the employment exchanges - some time, I call them unemployment exchanges, which is a fact - depicts that there are nothing less than 4.5 crores of unemployed people, and if you take the rural unemployment, the marginal unemployment, into account, the figure would further go up. Yesterday, some hon. Member was saying that employment means 180 days work in a year, and at the places, where the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, and particularly, the tribal people are residing, they do not get work even for three months' in a year, and there is no labour law, no legislation, nothing of the sort. And the political rhetoric that is being used by the present Government, the demagogy that is being used by the present Government, is that they are trying to protect those workers, and in order to protect those workers, the workers of the organised sector

are being attacked. The dismantling of the PSUs has already taken place. Lakhs of industries have been closed down, and the industries, which were privately run, which were privately administered and which were privately managed, have been closed down, and there is a serious economic recession and stagnation as well.

Madam, I would like to refer to the Tenth Five Year Plan only. They have admitted the slow-down in pace of employment growth in the nineties, which is also borne out by demographic census data - growth of main workers decreased from 2.34 per cent to 0.81 per cent. Similar trends in deceleration of employment growth are revealed for specific segments of employment- growth of workers in establishments covered by economic census came down from 2.84 per cent per annum in 1980-1990 to 1.71 per cent in 1990-1998. This is a direct fall out of the economic policies that are being vigorously pursued by this Government. Employment in establishments covered by the Employment Market Information System of the Ministry of Labour grew at 1.20 per cent per annum during 1983-1994, but decelerated to 0.53 per cent during the next five years, 1994-1999. However, the latter decline was mainly due to a decrease in employment in the public sector establishments. And, Madam, I would once again like to mention that at the micro level, the increase in productivity of labour should be reflected in higher growth of real wages. My previous speaker has talked about the real wages. I can cite hundreds of examples where even the agreements that have taken place between the labour unions, the trade unions, the recognized unions and the employers has been shelved; those are not being given any importance, and the employers are acting absolutely as per their whims and fancies. The situation in this country has become very peculiar in the recent past, and that is why, millions of workers in this country are aggrieved.

Madam, I shall follow your advice that I should not take much time of the House. I shall just cite some examples. You will be shocked to know that the situation in the unorganized sector is horrifying. It has also been admitted by the Government that a number of small-scale units, lakhs of small-scale units, have been closed down because of the obvious reasons of economic recession and other economic problems by which the country is engulfed. In the unorganized sector, in so far as child labour is concerned, in so far as women and child labour is concerned, it is a horrifying situation. I am quoting from The Child Labour News Service of

1st August, 2002. The Child Labour News Services says, "the police freed sixty people, including more than a dozen children, who were being kept in slave-like conditions by a mine contractor in the central Indian State of Madhya Pradesh. The police raided the Chonda coal mine near Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh State after receiving a tip from the Bandhua Mukti Morcha (Bonded Worker Liberation Front), a local Non-Governmental Organization. The freed children told police that the mine contractor only gave them a handful of flour and some salt to eat, nothing else. The adults received no wages. The contractor fled and the police have launched a hunt for him. Although no official statistics are available, activists told that hundreds of adults and children are "mortgaged to money-lenders and businessmen in exchange for very small sums of money or food". This is the situation existing with the contractual labourers in different mines and quarrying sectors.

Madam, I would also refer to what is being called infrastructural development. There are reports from West Bengal also. In West Bengal, even the Central Government projects are being undertaken by many contractors; and there, the workers are not being paid any wages. They are being paid with a little amount of food and if at all they are paid wages, they are being fleeced. They are all contract workers; only the policy of 'hire and fire' is being followed. Madam, there is another interesting piece of news from Amritsar, reported in August, 2002 that "Amritsar police rescued 53 minors believed to be working as bonded labour in the famous jewellery market, Guru Bazar, during a raid. Fifteen persons believed to be child labour contractors were also nabbed. The raid was conducted on the complaint of some local leaders of the market. Most of the rescued child labourers were natives of West Bengal, whose parents were lured by the contractors with the promise of jobs for their children in Punjab. Preliminary interrogation of the alleged contractors revealed that majority of these children were paid anything from Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 a week and were forced to work for about 18 hours a day." That is the sad plight of the people, especially women and children, in the unorganized sector. And Madam, of late, it is being observed that the Labour Department is a mute spectator to the situation. Either they are not informed, or do not care to be informed, or they prefer to be silent, because their motive is to give indulgence to these money-lenders, to these money-launderers, to these profiteering contractors as well as these inhuman elements, which are existing in our political and economic system today. Madam, I put it very strongly that as on today, the

situation in this country is quite volcanic. Unless this situation is properly looked into and sympathetically considered, and the Government changes its stand, and the recommendations given in the Second Labour Commission are in tune with the much talked-about process of globalisation, with the process of neo-liberal globalisation, and we are also told how the rich are becoming richer and the poor, poorer; how the people are being retrenched without any rhyme and reason; what sort of treatment is being meted out to the people, the situation will go out of our control. Historic May Day struggle in Chicago some century back laid down that the hours in a day of the worker should be eight hours for work, eight hours for rest and eight hours for social activity. This well-earned right of the workers is being trampled upon, and trampled upon quite indiscriminately in different parts of the country. The Government is not coming to the rescue of the workers. Unless the Government comes to the rescue of the workers, including the agricultural workers, who are millions in number, the situation in the country will become anarchic. When you are talking about the problems concerning internal security, when you are talking about the problem of terrorism, when you are talking about the disturbances concerning law and order, when you are talking about the social imbalances, these problems will further aggravate unless we look into this important arena of our national life. The Labour Department was expected to take initiative in this regard. In fact, the Labour Ministry was formed only for that purpose. Unless the Labour Ministry takes initiative for ameliorating the problems of millions of labourers of the country, the country will be in doldrums. It will further plunge into doldrums. The situation will be quite anarchic. We will not be able to take care of our internal security problems, we will not be able to tackle the problem of terrorism in this country, unless this important area is properly looked after. Madam, I do not personally believe that this Government is capable of looking after the interests of our labourers, agricultural workers and the common people of this country, but, still, through you, in this House, I urge the Government of India to be careful about the situation and take note of the developments taking place. It should take some concrete and ameliorative measures so that the country can be saved from chaos. It is a question of saving the nation from ominous disaster originated as a result of neo-globalisation. With these words, I conclude. Thank you very much.

श्री गया सिंह (बिहार) : धन्यवाद मैडम, सबसे पहले मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार को यह कहना चाहता हूं कि आज हिन्दुस्तान की तमाम सेंटर ट्रेड यूनियन और इंडिपेंडेंट यूनियन के

नेतृत्व मे बी.एम.एस. को छोड़ करके, यहां कई लाख लोग आए हैं। आज से एक सप्ताह पहले मैं और चितरंजन जी होम मिनिस्टर से मिलने गए थे कि इतने लाख लोग आ रहे हैं। मजदूरों के साथ संगठित मजदूर, असंगठित मजदूर, खेत मजदूर सभी आ रहे हैं तथा बी.एम.एस. को छोड़ करके सभी लोग उनके साथ हैं, तो आप उनको पार्लियामेंट तक आने के लिए इजाजत दे दीजिए क्योंकि एक महीना पहले सबने लिख कर दिया था। हमारे होम मिनिस्टर ने लेफ्टीनेंट गवर्नर को फोन किया और कमिश्नर को भी फोन किया। लेकिन दुख के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि आज से 5 रोज पहले इन्होंने साधुओं को पार्लियामेंट तक आने की इजाजत दे दी लेकिन हिन्दुस्तान के प्रोडक्शन में लगे हुए लाखों मजदूर और उनके नेताओं को पार्लियामेंट तक आने के लिए तो क्या वे लोग रामलीला मैदान से भी आगे नहीं जा सकते हैं। ऐसी उन्होंने हिदायत दी जो सरकार के लिए शर्म की बात है। मैडम, मैं आपके माध्यम से कहना चाहता हूं कि अभी हमारे साथियों ने पहले ही विस्तृत रूप में रखा है। आज ये जो बाहर प्रदर्शन कर रहे हैं उनकी कोई लम्बी-चौड़ी डिमांड नहीं हैं। ये क्या कह रहे हैं? हिन्दुस्तान में आज खेत मजदूर जिसकी चर्चा हमारे साथियों ने की आज उसके लिए इसी सेशन में क्या कोई बिल ला सकते हैं? आप अखबारों में असंगठित लोगों की सामाजिक सुरक्षा की बात कर रहे हैं। ये जो सारे लोग आए हैं उनकी यह डिमांड है कि खेत मजदूरों के लिए एक विस्तृत बिल इस पार्लियामेंट के अंदर लाएं और उनकी सामाजिक सुरक्षा और उनके दूसरे सवालो को उसके अंदर इंक्लूड करें। साहब सिंह वर्मा जी गांव से आते हैं और इनका भाषण लम्बा होता है। इसलिए हमको भरोसा है कि अपनी जनता के लिए और अपने गांव के असंगठित लोगों के लिए यह बिल लाएंगे जिसका यह एश्यूरेंस अपने भाषण में देंगे। दूसरी बात, आज उनका कहना है कि आप प्रोफिट मेकिंग इण्डस्ट्री के निजीकरण की ओर जा रहे हैं। प्रधान मंत्री जी लाल किले से भाषण देते हैं कि एक करोड़ लोगों को रोजगार देंगे और 4 साल, 13 महीना, 13 दिन और साढ़े तीन साल में दो करोड़ से ज्यादा लोगों को बेरोजगार आपने कर दिया। बैंक में तथा एल0आई0सी0 में एक लाख से ज्यादा लोग वॉलंटरी रिटायरमेंट में गए और तमाम पब्लिक सैक्टर में जो प्रोफिट मेकिंग इण्डस्ट्री हैं उनका निजीकरण भी कर रहे हैं और उनको वॉलंटरी रिटायरमेंट के माध्यम से नौकरी से हटा रहे हैं। असंगठित की बात आप करते हैं, सभी क्षेत्रों की चर्चा आपके सामने हुई है। ये करोड़ों लोग बेरोजगार हो रहे हैं और उसकी जगह आप मल्टीनेशनल को, विदेशियों को हमारे देश में ला रहे हैं। क्या होने वाला है? इस देश के लोग कहां जाएंगे? अब तो गांवों में लोग मजाक करने लगे हैं। संयोग ऐसा है कि सारे बैचलर लोग अब नेता बन गए हैं। उनको परिवार की जरूरत नही है। हमारे देश में जो करोड़ों लोग हैं तो उनके परिवार के बेरोजगार नौजवान लोग, पढ़े-लिखे लोग कहां जाएंगे? हमारे जीवन भाई ने कहा कि खाली एम्प्लायर के लिए ही सोचते हैं लेकिन साहब सिंह वर्मा जी मुख्य मंत्री भी रहे हैं, आपका भाषण अच्छा निकल रहा है, थोड़ा आप श्रमिकों के लिए भी सोचिए, आपका मंत्रिमंडल है। इसलिए उनकी जो डिमांड है, तो निजीकरण पर रोक लगाने की बात आपकी मिनिस्ट्री की तरफ से भी होनी चाहिए क्योंकि जो खासकर प्रोफिट मेकिंग इण्डस्ट्री हैं और जो मार्जनली प्रोफिट में हैं वैसी इण्डस्ट्री के निजीकरण होने से रोक लगाइए। आप लेबर लॉज चेंज करने जा रहे हैं। मत कीजिए। मैडम, मैं आपको बता रहा हूं कि पिछले चुनाव में बी.जे.पी. हिन्दुस्तान के तमाम वर्किंग क्लास से जीत कर इस उम्मीद से आई थी कि कुछ होने वाला है। अब की बारी-अटल बिहारी। क्योंकि आपने 13 दिन मे, 13 महीने मे 60 साल कर दिया था जिससे उम्मीद बढ़ गई थी। लेकिन अब वह उम्मीद उल्टी हो रही है और अगर लेबर लॉज आप इसी बजट सेशन में लाएंगे तो जैसा हमारे साथियों

ने कहा कि आज वे ऐलान करने वाले हैं कि जिस दिन आप लाएंगे इसी बजट सेशन में तो पूरे देश के मजदूर हड़ताल पर चले जाएंगे। आपके लिए बड़ी मुश्किल हो जाएगी और आगे आने वाले चुनाव में आप जवाब नही दे पाएंगे। इंक्मटैक्स वगैरह-वगैरह और जितनी चीजें हो रही हैं वह अलग बात है। लेकिन अगर आप लेबर लॉज लाएं तो मुश्किल में पड़ जाएंगे। इसका आप पता लगवा लीजिए कि पूरे देश से कितने लोग आए हैं और आज दिल्ली की सड़कों पर घूम रहे हैं। मैडम, उनकी डिमांड बोनस की भी है। वे 12 महीना काम करेंगे और एक महीने का बोनस मिलेगा, ऐसा कानून बना हुआ है। तीन साल से फाइल घूम रही है। उनकी डिमांड है कि आप बोनस मे सीलिंग को उठा दीजिए। आज बहुत सारे संगठित क्षेत्र के अंदर मजदूर बोनस लेने के हकदार नहीं रहे गए हैं क्योंकि उनकी पे-रिविजन हो गई है। जो आपका पुराना कानून है उसमें अमेडमेंट करने की जरूरत है कि - नो सीलिंग, ताकि 12 महीने के बाद एक महीने का बोनस मिल सके। प्राइवेट सैक्टर दे रहा है, पब्लिक सैक्टर मे आपने बैन कर दिया। इसलिए इस बैन को उठाइए, सीलिंग को उठाइए, यह भी उनकी डिमांड है।

आप रोज कहते हैं कि प्रोविडेंट फंड से हम घर बनाएंगे। बहुत अच्छी योजना है आपकी। उस पर 12 परसेंट इंटरेस्ट था लेकिन साढ़े 9 परसेंट के लिए तो आप रोज बोल रहे हैं कि वह रहेगा। तो आप 12 परसेंट रिस्टोर नही कर सकते? आज उनकी यह डिमांड है कि आप उनके प्रोविडेंट फंड मे 12 परसेंट करिए। कल महामहिम राष्ट्रपति जी बोल रहे थे। आप लोग भी वहां बोल रहे थे। सामाजिक सुरक्षा -प्रोविडेंट फंड की चर्चा कर रहे थे। आज जो लाखों मजदूर आए हैं उनकी यह डिमांड भी है कि साढ़े 9 परसेंट की जगह उनके प्रोविडेंट फंड पर 12 परसेंट का इंटरेस्ट रहना चाहिए और हम समझते हैं कि साहब सिंह वर्मा जी जरूर इस ओर कदम उठाएंगे। कम से कम एश्यूरेंस नही दे तो प्रयास करेंगे, यह भी तो बोलें। कल-परसों में बजट आने वाला है तो आपकी चमक हो जाएगी और अगर नहीं चमकना चाहते हैं तो हम क्या कर सकते हैं। मैडम, आज देश के मजदूरों की छंटाई हो रही है, बेरोजगार हो रहे हैं। लोगों के अंदर कई तरह की परेशानियां बढ़ रही हैं और आपके केन्द्रीय श्रम विभाग को चाहिए तथा उनकी ओर से कानून मे ऐसा परिवर्तन नही लाइए जो देश के मजदूर आपके नाम पर हमेशा-हमेशा के लिए कौलिख लगाने की बात करे कि यह मजदूर विरोध कानून लाए। तो ऐसा आप नहीं लाइए, यह यहां विश्वास दिलाइए। मैडम, आपने घंटी बजा दी है। मेरी बात समाप्त हो रही है। मैं अंत में यही कहना चाहता हूं कि आज जो लाखों मज़दूर आये हैं, आप उनके पक्ष मे कोई भाषण दीजिए, अन्यथा चुनाव का एक साल बच रहा है। अगर आपको उत्तर प्रदेश और दूसरे राज्य जैसा वापस जाना है क्योंकि सब जगह पर गुजरात जैसा होने वाला नहीं है अगर वैसी स्थिति मे आपको जाना है तो अलग बात है। आप दिल्ली में रहेंगे, हम लोग तो सत्ता मे जाने वाले नही हैं, आप ही लोग सत्ता में रहने वाले हैं, इसलिए इस सत्ता को बचाने के लिए मज़दूरों के सवालो को ठीक से समझिए और मज़दूर विरोधी कानून नही लाइये। धन्यवाद।

श्री रामचन्द्र खूंटिआ (उड़ीसा) : माननीय उपसभापति महोदया, आज जो डिसकसन हो रहा है, इसके साथ साथ ही सारे देश से आये हुए लाखों मज़दूर दिल्ली मे डिमांस्ट्रेशन कर रहे हैं। आज इस संसद मे जीवन राय जी, भट्टाचार्य जी और गया सिंह जी ने जो मांगे रखी हैं, उन मांगो का हम समर्थन करते हैं और यह आशा करते हैं कि यह सरकार, मज़दूरो की जो मांगें हैं, उन पर विचार करेगी। मज़दूरों की छंटनी बंद की जायेगी और पब्लिक सैक्टर जिसमे

इस सरकार का कोई कंट्रीब्युशन नही है, उसको बेचना बंद करेगी। सारे देश मे जो चालीस करोड़ मज़दूर हैं, उनके लिए इम्पलायमेंट का बंदोबस्त किया जायेगा। हालांकि अभी सारे भारत वर्ष मे जो स्थिति है, पब्लिक सैक्टर मे जो 2.179 मिलियन लोग थे, अभी वे कम होकर 1.742 हो गए हैं अर्थात पाइंट 437 मज़दूर कम हो गये हैं। यह सरकार असंगठित क्षेत्र के बारे में बहुत जोर-शोर से बोलती है कि असंगठित क्षेत्र के मज़दूरों के लिए कुछ होना चाहिए जब कि संगठित क्षेत्र के लिए सब कुछ है। बात यह नही है कि सिर्फ संगठित क्षेत्र में मज़दूर कम हो गये हैं, बात यह है कि अगर सबसे कम हो गया है, मज़दूर कम हो गया है, तो वह असंगठित क्षेत्र में है। इसीलिए हमारे देश का जो एग्रीकल्चरल क्षेत्र है जिसमे कृषि मज़दूर सबसे ज्यादा काम करते हैं, जो कंस्ट्रक्शन निर्माण क्षेत्र है, जो फॉरेस्ट क्षेत्र है जिसमे लाखो-करोड़ो मज़दूर, आदिवासी, हरिजन, महिलाएं काम करती हैं, आज जो नई टेक्नीक से, जो मशीन से काम होता है - आनरेबल मिनिस्टर साहिब सिंह वर्मा जी जानते हैं कि दिल्ली मेट्रो मे जहां हजारों-करोड़ो रुपया खर्च होता है, इसमें अगर मशीनों से काम नहीं किया जाता तो लाखो-करोड़ो मज़दूरों को इसमें एम्पलाइमेंट मिल सकता था। मगर होता क्या है ? मल्टोनेशनल को पांच सौ करोड़ रुपया मिला है, लेकिन उसमे एक सौ लोग विद मशीन के काम करते हैं। उन लाखो मज़दूरों का क्या होगा ? जहां 40 करोड़ मजदूर हैं, उनमे से 20 करोड़ लोगो को केवल सो दिन तक भी मज़दूरी नही मिलती है। क्या होगा, उन मज़दूरो का जो एग्रीकल्चरल क्षेत्र मे, निर्माण क्षेत्र में, फॉरेस्ट क्षेत्र मे, असंगठित क्षेत्र मे काम करते हैं? इन मज़दूरो की चिन्ता सरकार को करनी चाहिए। संगठित क्षेत्र मे जो अस्सी लाख लोग काम करते हैं, पब्लिक सैक्टर मे काम करते हैं, इनको 12 मास, छह मास, तीन मास की तनख्वाह नही मिली है, बोनस नहीं मिला है, छुट्टी नहीं मिली है और 15 सौ करोड़ से ज्यादा रुपया उनका पब्लिक सैक्टर पर बकाया है आल इंडिया सीमेंट कारपोरेशन का है, एचसीएल का है, कई ऐसे कारपोरेशन हैं जिनका पैसा बकाया है। 15 सौ करोड़ रुपया नही मिला है। मज़दूरो को पैसा नहीं मिला है। अगर किसी को विरोध करना है तो उनका करें जिनमें मजदूरो को पैसा नहीं मिला है, बोनस नही मिला है, ग्रेज्युटी नही मिली है। जिन्होंने मज़दूरो का बकाया नही दिया है तो पहले उनका विरोध करना चाहिए, उनको पोटा में बंद करना चाहिए, उनको जेल मे बंद करना चाहिए। मज़दूरो का बकाया पैसा दिलवाने की जिम्मेदारी सरकार की है।

मैडम, अब ये बोलते हैं कि जो काम चलता है, वह सरकार कैसे करेगी, कहां से करेगी? यह बात अभी आई है। निर्माण क्षेत्र मे मजदूरो के लिए एक कानून है बिल्डिंग कंस्ट्रक्शन एक्ट, 1996 । इस कानून को लागू करने के लिए भी सरकार की तरफ से कोई कदम नही उठाया जाता है। जो असंगठित क्षेत्र के नाम पर एक कानून बनाने के लिए एक पत्र सेंट्रल ट्रेड यूनियन को जारी किया है, मिनिस्टर साहब ने कुछ इस हिसाब का इनीसिएटिव लिया है। इस कानून से कोई फायदा नही है, इसमे कोई दम नही है। जैसे इंश्योरेस के संबंध मे सरकार की तरफ से कहा गया है कि सारे देश में असंगठित क्षेत्र में पचास डिस्ट्रिक्ट्स मे इंश्योरेंस जारी किया है । कोई भी निजी इंश्योरेस कम्पनी वह इंश्योरेस दे सकती है, जिस इंश्योरेंस की बात करके सरकार सारा क्रेडिट लेना चाहती है । इसलिए इस इंश्योरेंस की कोई वैल्यू नही है । महोदया, आज सारे देश मे सरकार यह कहती है कि मजदूर सब ले जाते हैं । मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि देश मे सरकार किसके लिए काम करेगी? चालीस करोड़ मजदूर जो देश में हैं, जिनके परिवार मे और लोग भी हैं, उनके लिए सरकार की चिंता होगी या नही, यह सबसे बड़ा

प्रश्न है । आज देश में बेरोजगारी बढ़ती जा रही है। इसके अतिरिक्त जिन लोगों की छंटनी होती है, वी.आर.एस. में जाते हैं, वे भी बेरोजगारों की श्रेणी मे आ जाते हैं । असंगठित क्षेत्र मे लोगों को जो काम मिलता था, वह भी नहीं मिलता । स्वर्ण जयंती योजना, यू.एस. इम्प्लॉयमेंट गारंटी प्रोग्राम और गरीब लोगों के लिए अन्य योजनाओं के बारे में सरकार की तरफ से कहा जाता है किन्तु आज इस सदन मे सरकार की तरफ से रूरल डैवलपमेंट मिनिस्टर ने रिप्लाई दिया है कि हमारा कोई टारगेट नहीं है । इससे बड़ी शर्मनाक बात और क्या हो सकती है ? हमें लेबर मिनिस्टर से यह भी पूछना है कि अगर आप एक करोड़ लोगों को इम्प्लायमेंट देते हैं, इम्प्लॉयमेंट इंश्योरेंस स्कीम में और स्वर्ण जयंती योजना तथा अन्य योजनाओं में, तो उन लोगों को न्यूनतम मजदूरी आप 50 रुपये देने को कहते हैं । किन्तु उन्हें वह भी नहीं मिलती है । उनको रविवार की छुट्टी नहीं मिलती, उन्हें ओवर टाइम नही मिलता, बाकी जो बैनीफिट्स हैं, ग्रेच्युटी है, वह भी उन्हें नहीं मिलती है। क्या यह जानकारी आपको है या नहीं? अगर है तो आपको उसके संबंध में विचार करना चाहिए । इसके अतिरिक्त मैं यह भी पूछना चाहता हूं कि जब आप ऐस्टीमेट बनाते हैं कि एक करोड़ लोगो के लिए काम हो गया है तो क्या आप इस बात पर विचार करते हैं कि आठ घंटे काम करने के बाद उसे रैस्ट चाहिए, छुट्टियां मिलनी चाहिए, अन्य बैनीफिट्स मिलने चाहिए। उसका ऐस्टीमेट आपकी सरकार ने लगाया या नहीं ? अगर नहीं लगाया है तो यह भी लगाना चाहिए । क्योंकि अगर आप इस पर विचार नहीं करेंगे तो उनको ठीक से पैसा नहीं मिलेगा । दूसरा, क्या आपको यह जानकारी है कि देश में ऑनरेबल सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने जो डाटा दिया है, for fixing the minimum wages, it includes taking five persons of family; कितना खाना खाएंगे, कितने चावल की जरूरत है, कितनी दाल चाहिए, कितने कपड़े की जरूरत है, अगर उसका हिसाब लगाया जाए तो उसके लिए उन्हें 117 रुपये चाहिए, that should be the minimum wages in the country. कोर्ट ने जो पैरामीटर निर्धारित किया है, इसके हिसाब से चावल, गेहूं, कपड़ा या तेल आदि की जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए 117 रुपये की जरूरत है । फिर आपने पचास रुपये मिनिमम मजदूरी फिक्स करने के लिए जो डायरैक्शन दी है, क्या वह ठीक है ? उसके संबंध में भी आपको विचार करना चाहिए । इसके अतिरिक्त कभी कभी देश में मिनिस्टर यह कहते हैं - माननीय डिसइनवैस्टमेंट मिनिस्टर ने कहा है कि लेबर के बीच में झगड़ा है, उनके बीच मे यूनिटी नहीं है । Madam, I want to say here - it has been mentioned by the hon. Minister Shri Arun Shourie here, while giving reply to BPCL and HPCL debate - that there is no unity in the Trade Unions. I can say, a hundred per cent, there is unity and there is the proof today. INTUC, CITU, HMS, AITUC, जितने भी मजदूर संगठन हैं, सब मिलकर काम कर रहे हैं । यह कहा गया है कि INTUC डिसइनवैस्टमेंट का विरोध नहीं करता है । I will quote, Madam, here one thing. This is a copy of the Resolution passed in the 27th Plenary Session of the INTUC held in Jharkhand, Ranchi where it was resolved unanimously to oppose any move of the Government to disinvest or privatise; disinvest more than 51 per cent and also privatise any profit making public sector in the line of the Resolution passed in Bangalore, AICC session. This, I have quoted from INTUC 27th Plenary Session held at Ramanujam Nagar, Ranchi.

1.00 p.m..

Coming to another point, I will say that a letter has been written by the INTUC President to the Finance Minister where it has been clearly stated that the Public Sector Undertakings were created to play a dominant role in the country's economy, which they did play well all through. But in the recent past, according to the policy of the Government, PSUs are in the process of privatization. This letter was given by the President of the INTUC to the Finance Minister in the month of January. Madam, I have got the Indian Worker of 1-15 January with me where it has been clearly stated that the INTUC Working Committee strongly opposes privatisation of profit-making public sector undertakings and in no case the disinvestment should be more than 30 per cent. So what the Minister and the Government has said is wrong. The INTUC is not supporting it. Madam, I am also the national Vice-President of the INTUC. The INTUC is with the workers and with the movement, a hundred per cent. It strongly opposes any disinvestment or privatisation of the public sector.

I would like to mention one point about women. Due to this economic policy, the most affected people would be the women workers and the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe workers. As you know, the percentage of literacy among women is very less. The percentage of employment among women is only 7 per cent in the organised sector and 25 per cent in the unorganised sector. Gradually, the literacy rate among women was increasing and they were getting employment at the higher level. But due to the new economic policy, there would be fewer opportunities for women and they would not get employment. The future of women is doomed. The Scheduled Caste, the Scheduled Tribe and the backward class people for whom there is a provision for reservation, were gradually getting educated and were becoming IAS, IPS, engineers and doctors. But now what will happen is this. When all the public sector undertakings will be privatised, there will be no reservation and they would not get any employment. In this reform process which will continue in this country, the future of the women, the Scheduled Caste, the Scheduled Tribe and the backward class people is doomed. These people are loosing their jobs. There is no future for them. It will create a very grave situation in the country. If the Government does not consider it seriously, they will not be doing justice to the women, the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and the backward class people and to the 40 crore working class people. If the

Government feels that by betraying these people and by creating problems for these people, they can survive, they are wrong. The workers will not forgive this Government. The workers, the general public, the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and the backward class people will jointly build a movement and this Government will not last long. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: At least, somebody has spoken about women. मंत्री जी, आप भी जवाब में थोड़ा ध्यान रखिएगा, महिलाओं का खासकर because with due apology to the trade unions, whenever they negotiate, they forget about women.

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल): थोड़ा नहीं, पूरा ध्यान रखेंगे ।

उपसभापति : थोड़ा ही रख लें तो बहुत है । Now we will adjourn for lunch at 1.15 p.m. and then assemble at 2.15 p.m. Shri S. Viduthalai Virumbi.

SHRI S.VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Madam Deputy Chairperson, on the Calling Attention regarding the conditions of the labour in the Indian sub-continent, the Government has placed before us a statement. Madam, I know that hon. Minister is pro-labour. But, Madam, my first objection to the statement is that the report given to us is only up to 1999-2000. I hope the hon. Minister of the Government of India may have received the particulars up to 2002, March. In that sense, this statement is the same statement which was provided during a reply given on 16th August, 2001, when a question was raised by my friend, Shri Nilotpal Basu, Starred Question No.347, dated 16th August, 2001. For that question, they provided a statement in August, 2001. The same statement has been reproduced here only with certain dots here and there. That is, the figures that they put in millions in the earlier statement, have now been given in crores. That is why, the points have now come one by one. That is the only difference I found in this statement. Madam, the statement actually contradicts itself in the sense that para 4 contradicts with para 2. Para 4 says that whenever any complaint regarding the violation of labour laws is received, necessary inspections are conducted and due relief is provided to the affected workers thereby averting any labour unrest on this account. This is the information that has been provided in paragraph 4. But, para 2 says that it is not so. It says the number of strikes or lockouts declined during 1997-2000, although there has been an increase in the number of

man-days lost due to these disturbances. That means they say that they are able to avoid strikes. They are able to provide the affected workers with relief. In case relief has been provided to the affected workers, how many man-days have been lost, as per the information provided in paragraph 2?

Madam, I want to raise some pertinent questions to the hon. Minister. My first question is: Why has the Government not provided the information up to March, 2002? My Second question is: Is it not a fact that paragraph 4 contradicts with the information provided in paragraph 2? My third question is: Will he enlighten us by providing two separate and correct pieces of information about the man-days lost due to strikes and lockouts? Paragraph 6, line No.3, talks about the Central sphere, for which the Central Government is the appropriate authority. Manpower rationalisation and closure of units is effected only after all other options for the revival and rehabilitation have been exhausted. Market economy has overtaken all these procedures and generally, man-days are lost. Therefore, what we have suggested previously is that amount realised by the privatisation and disinvestment of the public sector units, if it is kept in a separate account, instead of the Consolidated Fund of India, and spent for the capital expenditure for rehabilitation and revival, this would have been a better position.

Then, I would like to ask what is the percentage that you have spent out of the National Relief Fund for the VRS separately, retraining separately and redeployment separately. We would like to know generally, how you treat the VRS concept. How is the Government treating the concept of retraining and redeployment? Madam, in the statement, they say that actually the employment opportunities have increased. But, according to my information, it is not so. Your Annual Report for 2001-2002 at page No.229 provides, I quote, "The growth rate of employment is less than the growth rate of labour force indicating an increase in the unemployment rate." You say that the nominal figure has increased, but when the growth rate of employment is less than the growth rate of labour force indicating increase in the unemployment rate. What I want to know is when the unemployment rate has increased, how can you say that nominal figure has increased? Then, Madam, I find some contradiction between the statement given by the former Labour Minister at the ILO Conference and the statement that has been made now by the present Minister. I would

like to state here what the former Labour Minister had stated at the 88th Session of the International Labour Conference. I read from page No.37 which says: "Globalisation has manifested itself in the form of acute unemployment and underemployment. While the role of capital has gained importance, workers increasingly face uncertainty because they have no income security, social security or welfare. The ILO's World Employment Report has documented it. "These problems are posing challenges in the matter of development of the developing countries." As regards development of developing countries, what your predecessor had said is that there was acute unemployment and underemployment. He said, "Globalisation has manifested itself in the form of acute unemployment and underemployment." But, the present statement says, there is an increase. Therefore, the very statement of the hon. Minister goes in contradiction with what was mentioned by his predecessor at the ILO Conference. However, there is a commitment made by our Government. Now, I would like to say what type of a commitment has been made. The hon. Prime Minister himself has made some commitment. As regards this commitment, I want to quote two things. One is, at page 7, it is said, "No economic development can sustain itself without an inbuilt assurance of social justice." That is the observation made by hon. Prime Minister. Then, he said what the situation was. What he said was, "India has embarked on an ambitious path of nation-building to meet the legitimate aspirations of one billion citizens, and the non-fulfilment of even the basic needs of a large section of our population more than five decades after independence is a reality that our people find totally unacceptable with the passage of time. This unacceptability is breeding impatience which, too, is legitimate." Impatience is legitimate as per the observation made by the hon. Prime Minister. This impatience leads to unrest and, sometimes, there is even law and order problem. Madam, I will tell you what kind of an assurance was given by the hon. Prime Minister. While delivering his speech at the Shram Award function for the year 2000 on 14th February, 2002, in New Delhi, he said and I quote: "It is the responsibility of the Government to safeguard the interests of the workers while implementing such reforms, and I would like to assure you that we will discharge this responsibility fully." This assurance has been given by the hon. Prime Minister. We must stand by that assurance made to the nation. Therefore, to fulfil this assurance, what we expect from the Government is this. The Government is going to bring forward the Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill. You have to make this Bill in such a manner that whatever rights were enjoyed by the workers and

employees so far in this sub-continent should be protected, and the assurance given by the hon. Prime Minister to the employees and workers should be further strengthened. In the name of reform or rehabilitation, when you will be introducing the Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill, you should ensure that it further safeguards the rights of workers; that should not be diluted. And, the participation of workers should be ensured at three levels. No.1 is the floor level; No.2 is the planning level and No.3 is the administration level. At these three levels, the participation of workers should be ensured in the forthcoming legislation. Otherwise, it is not going to solve the problems of the labourers.

Madam, before concluding my speech, I want to say how much the people are suffering. During the period, 1996-2001, what were the rights provided to the workers working in Tamil Nadu? Shri Jibon Roy knows it well. For example, the transport workers were given nearly 20 per cent bonus. But, now, it has been reduced to 8.83 per cent. Our workers in the transport sector, workers in the unorganised sector, the Government employees and the teachers working in Tamil Nadu, all these sections have been affected. We have constituted some welfare boards for labourers. Previously, they were in operation, but now more or less, they have become dysfunctional. Therefore, the welfare boards which had been constituted by the previous Government have become dysfunctional. The agriculturists, workers, teachers and the Government employees, all are suffering, which is unprecedented in the history of Tamil Nadu. This is the situation prevailing in Tamil Nadu. I know it personally. There is an unrest among the people. What the present Government thinks is, it can subdue the workers by law and force. I can tell you in this august House that no force on this earth can subdue the workers or employees of Government throughout the world. Some three or four days back, I heard some hon. Member saying here that socialism has failed. But, according to my conscience, socialism, as incorporated in the Indian Constitution, will never fail. Socialism will never fail throughout the world. The mistake lies not with the concept of socialism, but with the persons handling it. Socialism has to be kept alive. The mixed economy, as envisaged by Pandit Nehru, should be continued in this country, then only our country will be saved. This country cannot be saved without protecting the workers and agriculturists. If it is not done, then it will create problems for our internal security. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister and the Government of India to safeguard the rights which are being enjoyed by the workers through amendments to the labour laws. Even

I suggest the hon. Minister that the workers should be given some more rights. With these words, I conclude.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The discussion on this subject will continue after lunch. I request the hon. Members, who are going to speak, though none of them is present here, that they should confine themselves to short speeches so that the Minister can answer. The House is adjourned for one hour for lunch.

The House then adjourned for lunch at seventeen minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at nineteen minutes past two of the clock,

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI) in the Chair]

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): Now, the Budget (Railways), 2003-2004.

THE BUDGET (RAILWAYS), 2003-2004

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a Statement (in English and Hindi) of the estimated receipts and expenditure of the Government of India for the year 2003-2004 in respect of Railways.

श्री बालकवि बैरागी (मध्य प्रदेश): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी ने यहां लोकसभा में तो सारा बजट हिन्दी में पढ़ा और यहां चार वाक्य भी हिन्दी में न बोलकर अंग्रेजी में बोले ।

श्री नीतीश कुमार : सर, यहां माननीय सदस्य अंग्रेजी में अनुवाद सुन रहे थे, आप यहां हिन्दी में सुन लीजिए ।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): Now, we take up the Calling Attention on the situation arising out of growing labour unrest caused by loss of job, violation of labour laws, closure of units, privatisation of PSUs, etc. Shri R.S. Gavai.